

AKIRA 6™



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AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

CHAPTER 6

MY FRIEND, MY ENEMY

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

The year is 2030. The world is rebuilding from World War III. In **Neo-Tokyo**, plans are being made to hold the next Olympics in the "old city"—where, thirty-eight years before, the first of the bombs fell.

Kaneda and his friends, teenage delinquents, make an unauthorized motorcycle run into the old city to check out the old site. They encounter a terrified child, known only as **Number 26**, possessing extraordinary telekinetic abilities. During the encounter, the paranormal boy gravely injures **Tetsuo**, one of Kaneda's close friends. Then, he vanishes.

The next night, at **Harukiya**, a tough local dive, **Kaneda** attempts, unsuccessfully, to pick up a newcomer, **Kay**. In fact, she and her companion, **Ryu**, are part of an underground resistance group dedicated to learning what is happening in the

old city and putting a stop to it.

Trouble ensues, and both delinquents and resistance fighters again encounter **Number 26**. **Ryu** attempts to reassure the paranormal boy, but **Kaneda** is anxious to punish him for injuring **Tetsuo**. As they argue, mysterious soldiers pursuing **Number 26** reach the scene, armed and ready. A firefight results.

Then the ominous **Colonel** in charge of the covert operation appears with a secret weapon—**Number 27**, a crippled paranormal child named **Masaru**. **Masaru** astonishes the resistance fighters by addressing **Number 26** as **Takashi**. **Kay** and **Ryu** had previously assumed that **Number 26** was the Colonel's ultimate weapon—the as-yet unseen paranormal giant code-named **Akira**.

Kaneda provokes a crisis by pretending to threaten **Takashi**, who is exhibiting symptoms of drug withdrawal. **Takashi** responds with telekinetic upheavals. **Kaneda** is again separated from the resistance fighters, but he manages to intercept and hide a pill meant for **Takashi**, who is recaptured by the Colonel's men.

The next day, **Tetsuo**—who following his accident was taken



Kaneda



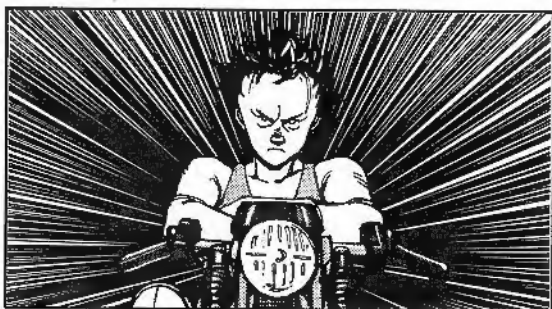
Tetsuo



Kay



Ryu



to a hospital by soldiers—reappears in school, seemingly all right. However, during Tetsuo's treatment, the **Colonel** has learned that the delinquent has great psychic potential.

Kaneda has a girlfriend in the school infirmary analyze the drug intended for **Takashi**. It is similar in substance to pills **Kaneda** and his friends take, but unbelievably concentrated and powerful.

Eager for action, **Kaneda**, **Tetsuo** and their gang head out for a rumble with their chief rivals—the vicious **Clown** gang.

A member of the **Clowns** corners and begins to beat **Tetsuo**. **Kaneda** and the rest of his friends rescue **Tetsuo**, who astonishes them, first by displaying an uncharacteristic bloodthirstiness, and then by challenging **Kaneda's** authority.

Determined not to let a new

human weapon escape him, the **Colonel** goes to the school the next day to collect **Tetsuo**.

Under the treatments of the **Colonel's** chief medical officer, **Tetsuo** begins to exhibit powerful psychic abilities...and to undergo great pain.

Meanwhile, **Kaneda**, trying to spy on the **Colonel** and learn what is happening to **Tetsuo**, re-encounters the members of the resistance, and is brought back to their headquarters. Questioned by **Ryu**, he denies all knowledge of the stolen drug.

Kiyoko, another of the psychic children under the **Colonel's** control, announces to her master the disastrous news that **Akira**—who is asleep, and expected to remain so for some time—is going to awaken in the near future. Meanwhile, at the resistance hideout, **Kaneda** encounters a ghost-like



Takashi



The Colonel



Masaru



Yamagata



apparition of himself, shouting Akira's name.

When soldiers enter the resistance hideout in force, **Kaneda** and **Kay** manage together to escape to **Harukiya**, where the bartender agrees to shelter them.

Overwhelmed by pain, **Tetsuo** breaks out of the Colonel's installation, leaving death in his wake. When he is cornered alone in the street by the **Clown** Gang, **Tetsuo** uses his burgeoning powers to slaughter those who oppose him. He takes control of the gang, letting them live in return for the massive amounts of drugs required to stave off his agony.

Kaneda, anxious to recover the motorcycle he left behind when he "joined" the resistance, eludes **Kay**. He is nearly caught by soldiers in the underground tunnels. **Kay** gets to the lost bike

first, and when **Kaneda** joins her, they are able to escape back to the safety of **Harukiya**.

Later, **Ryu** orders **Kay** to stay close to **Kaneda** and keep undercover. But these plans are complicated by the arrival at the bar of **Yamagata** and Kaneda's other friends. **Kaneda** is amazed at their tales of Tetsuo's new powers and bloodthirstiness.

Meanwhile, **Ryu** meets with **Nezu**, a resistance leader, and they share new evidence on the scale of the **Akira** project.

A spy from the Colonel's organization learns of the **Harukiya** hideout, but he is caught and left for dead by a resistance fighter.

Ignoring their status as fugitives, **Kaneda** eludes **Kay** and he and **Yamagata** lead all of the local street gangs on a massive all-out attack to stop **Tetsuo** and the **Clowns**.



Nezu



Kiyoko



Bartender



Clown





YOU
GET
WHAT
I'M
SAYING
?



DO YOU
HAVE A
LIQUOR
LICENSE?



SURE I DO.
EVERYTHING
HERE IS
TOTALLY
LEGITIMATE.

AND
IT'S UP TO
DATE?

SEE FOR YOUR-
SELF. NOT DUE
FOR RENEWAL
FOR A LONG
TIME, SO I'M IN
GOOD SHAPE.



WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
?!



OF COURSE YOU'RE AWARE THAT YOU'LL HAVE TO PASS ANOTHER INSPECTION BEFORE YOUR LICENSE IS RE-PLACED.



YOU DIRTY SON OF A ---!

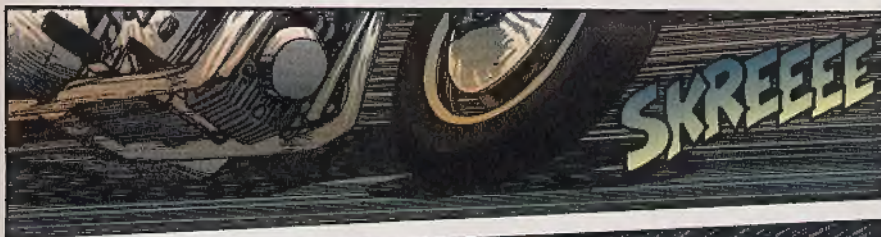


hssssss



THIS IS ALL SO POINTLESS. WE HAVE NO INTEREST IN CLOSING YOU DOWN.

YOU CAN SOLVE ALL YOUR PROBLEMS BY SIMPLY TELLING US WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW.



SKREEEE



VRRRRRN

GO SCREW
YOURSELVES!

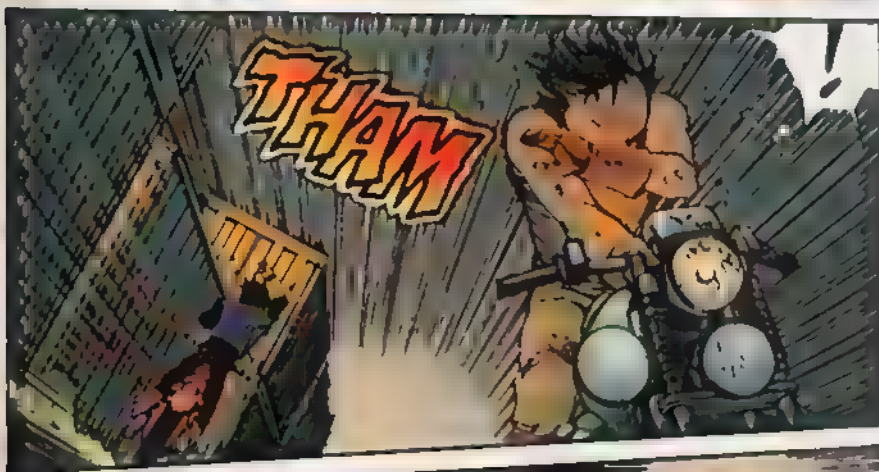
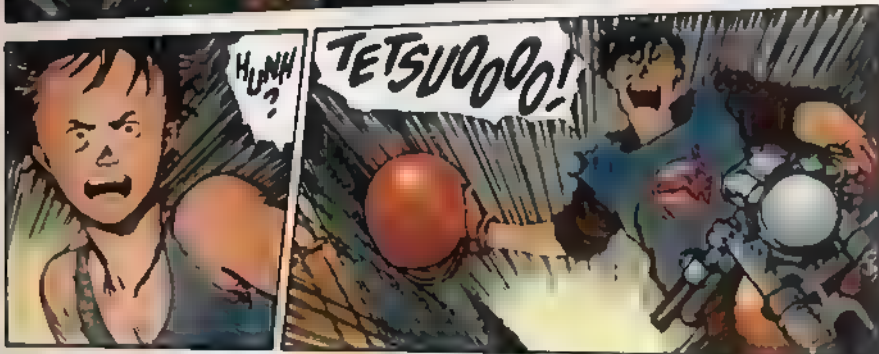
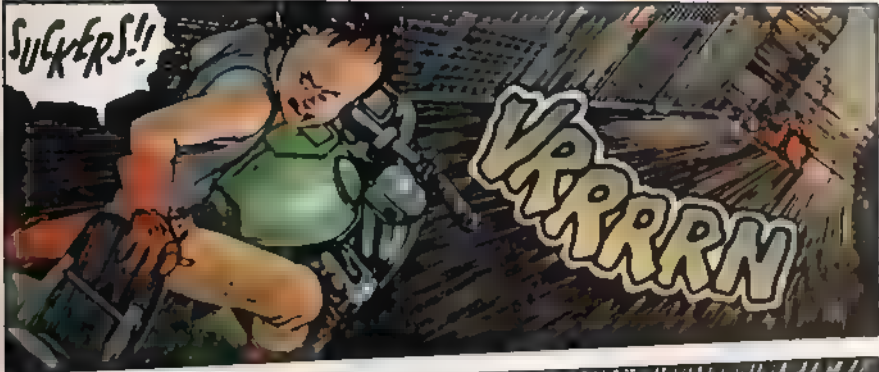
ZZZZ

EYAAAGH!!

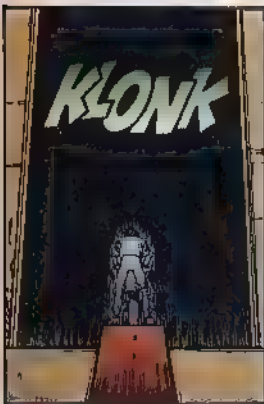
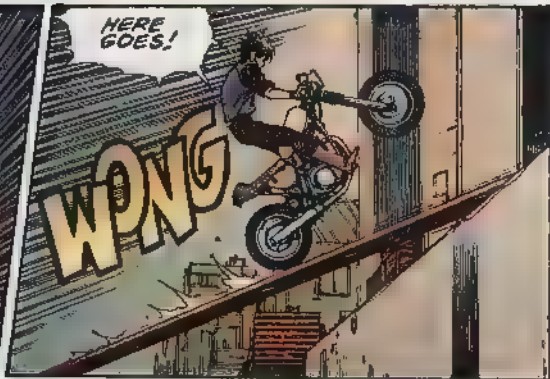
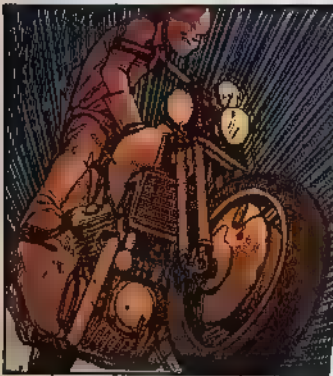
KRASH

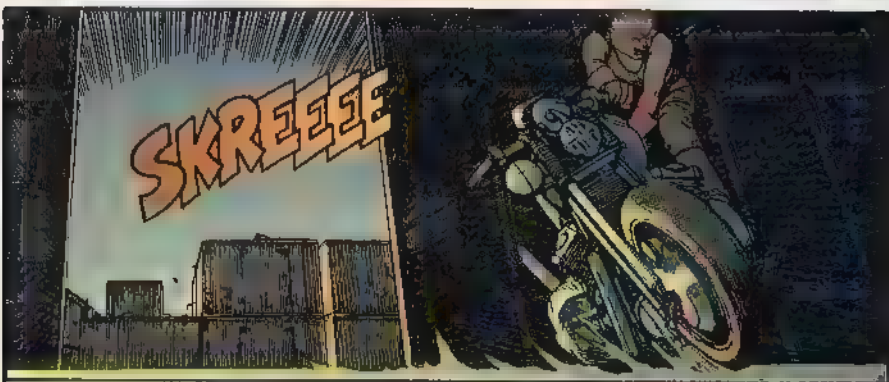
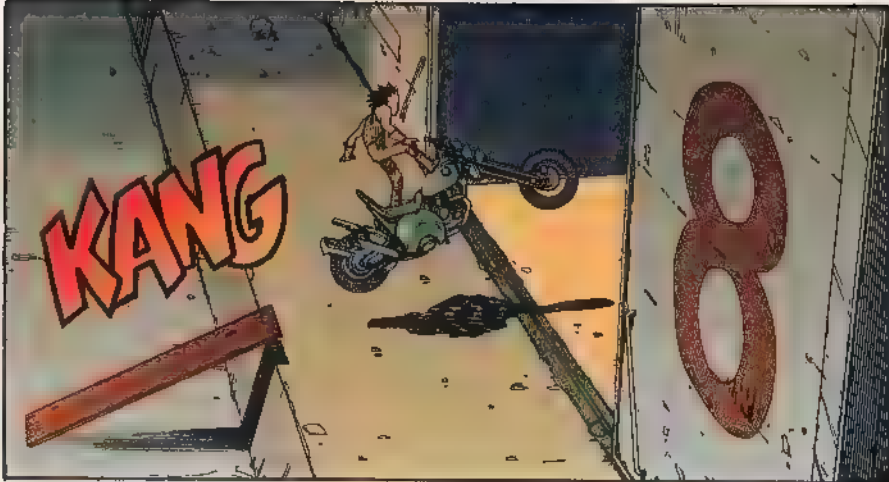
OH,
MAN...

BACK
THE
OTHER
WAY!



VRRRRRN





KLANK

OKAY,
TETSUO...
YOUR
ASS IS
OURS!



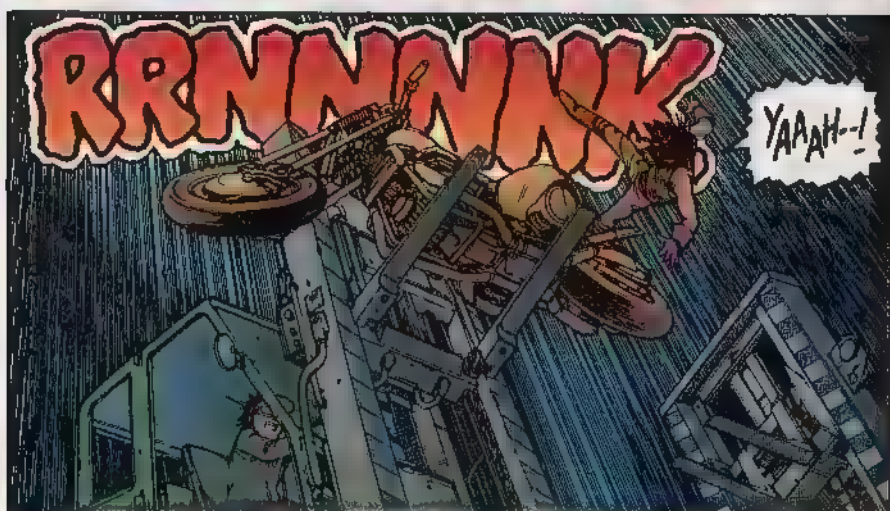
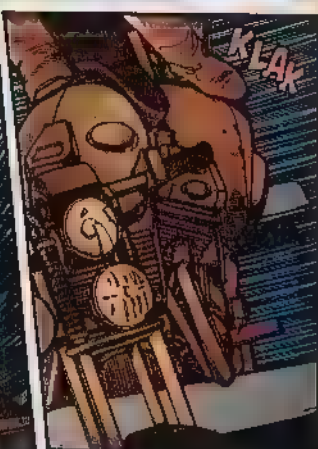
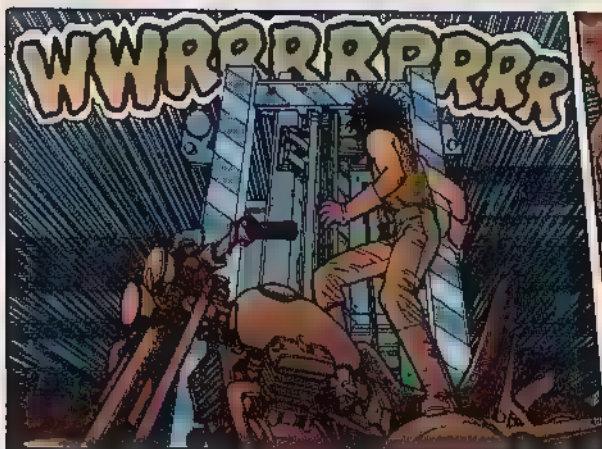
FN00M

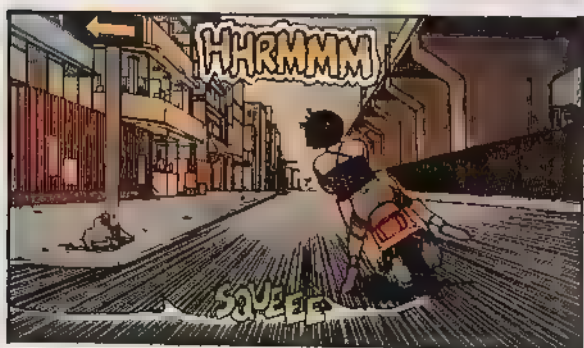
H-MEX..

NOW!



WRRRRRRRR





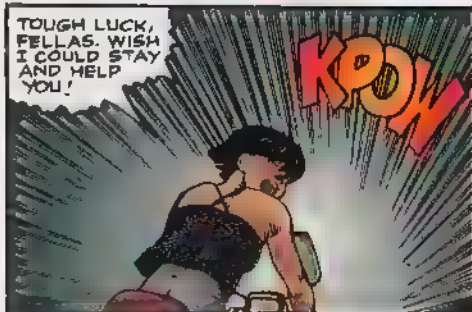
RUNK

KLATTER

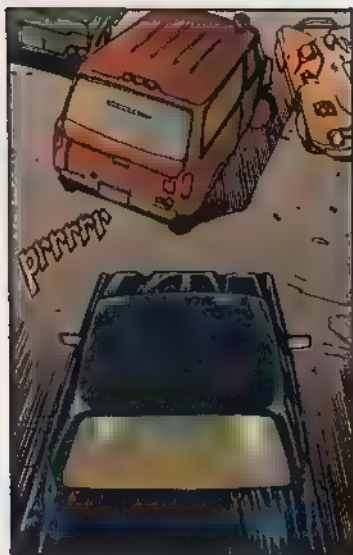


TOUGH LUCK,
FELLAS. WISH
I COULD STAY
AND HELP
YOU!

KPOW

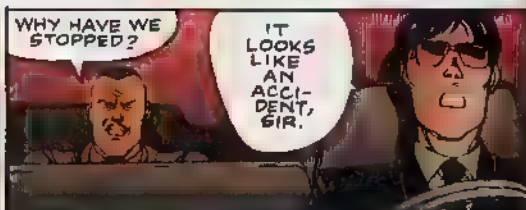


HEY...
WASN'T
SHE...?



WHY HAVE WE
STOPPED?

IT
LOOKS
LIKE
AN
AC-
CIDENT,
SIR.

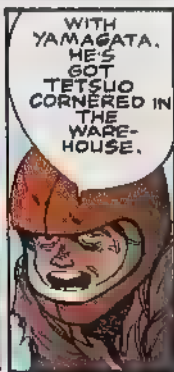
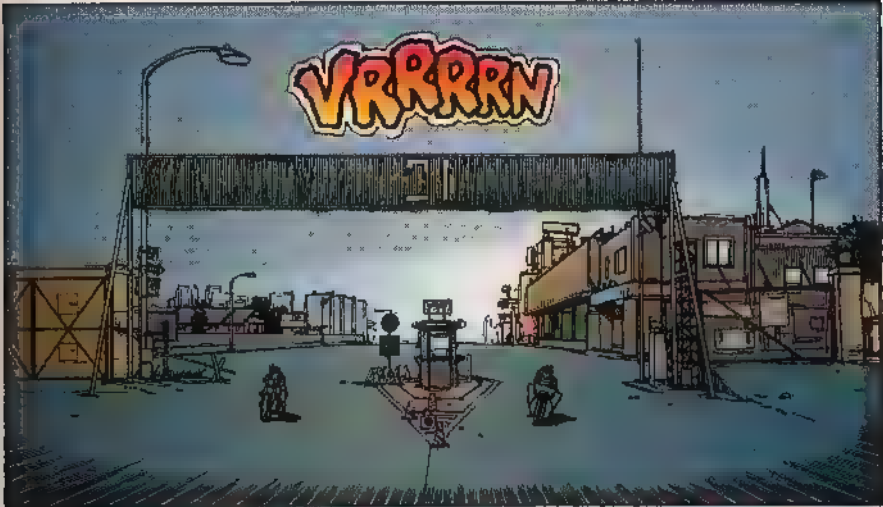


I'M NOT
BLIND,
YOU
IDIOT!
GET
MOVING!

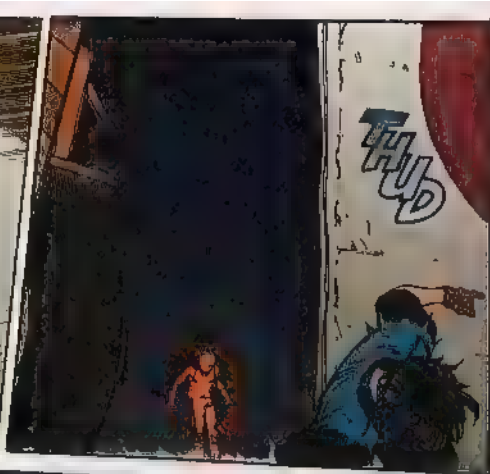
Y-YESIR!

CLEAR
THE
ROAD!!



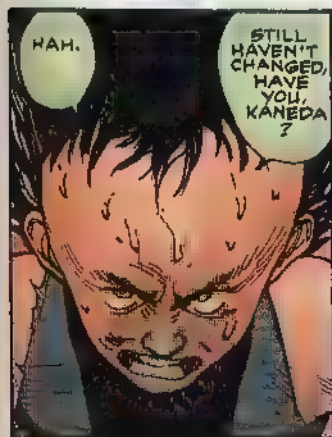
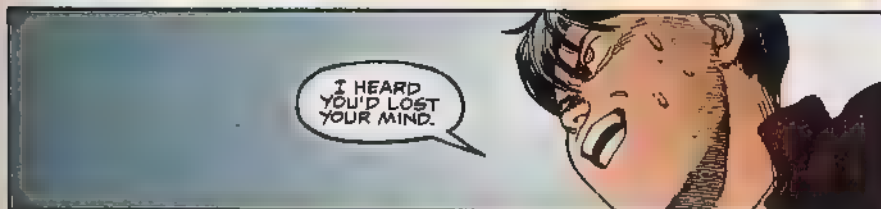
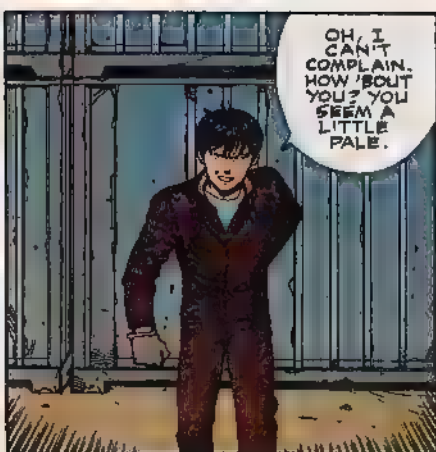
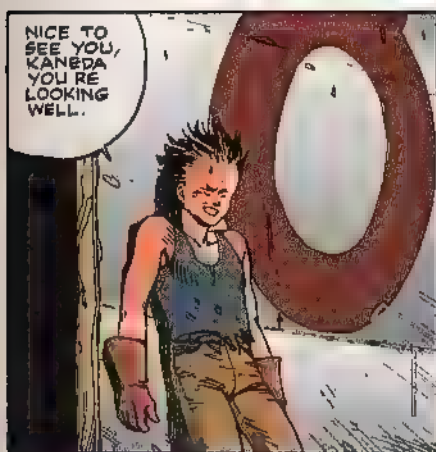






SKREEEE! **EEEEEEEEE!**







JUST LIKE
WHEN WE
WERE
KIDS!!

NO
MATTER
WHAT WE
DID, YOU
ALWAYS
HAD
TO
BE
IN
CHARGE
!



I HEAR YOU'RE
RUNNING SOME-
THING NOW,
TOO--

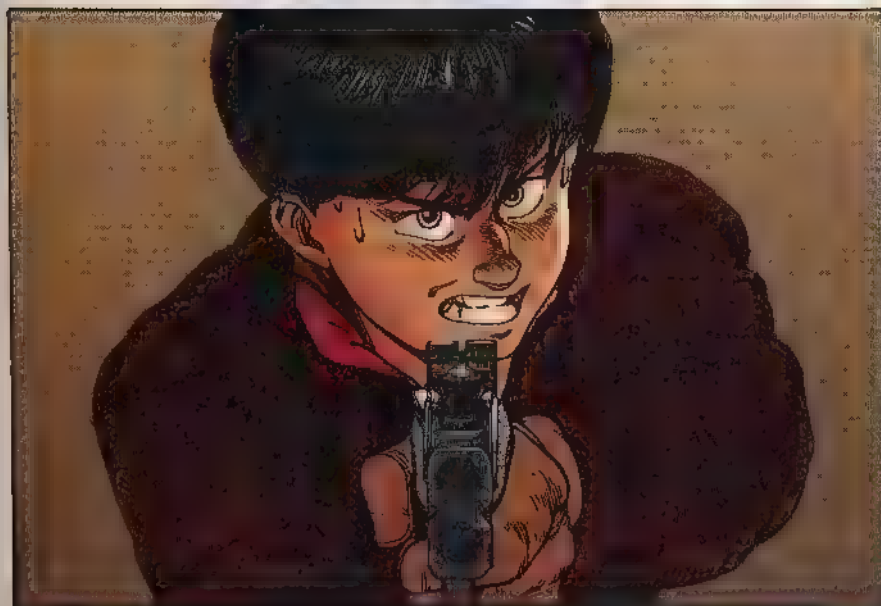
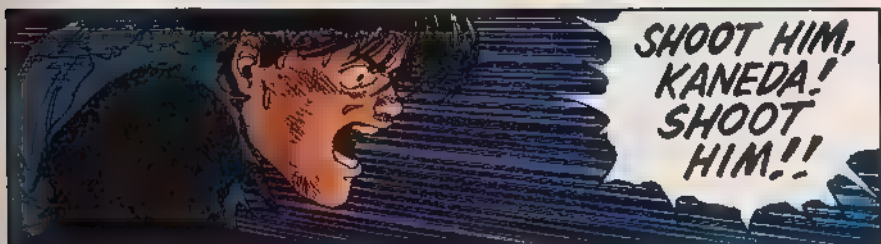
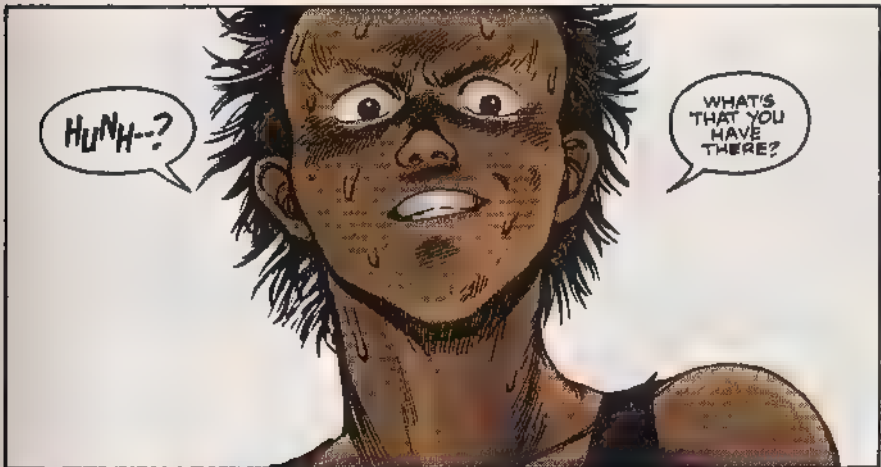
--A
CESSPOOL.



KANEDA!



WHAT?!



FINE!

IF
YOU
WANT TO
SHOOT
ME GO
AHEAD!



...



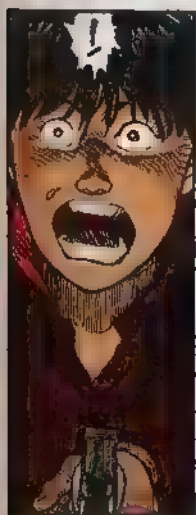
WHAT
ARE
YOU
WAITING
FOR?!

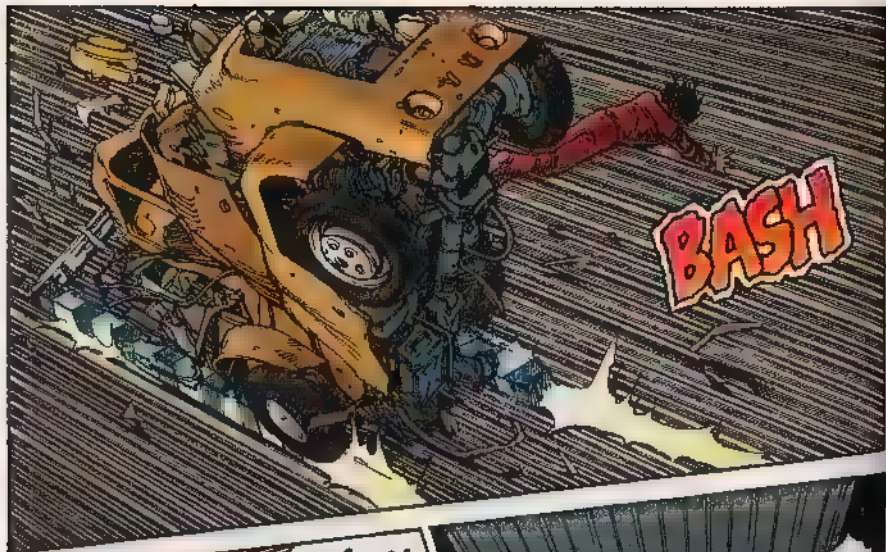


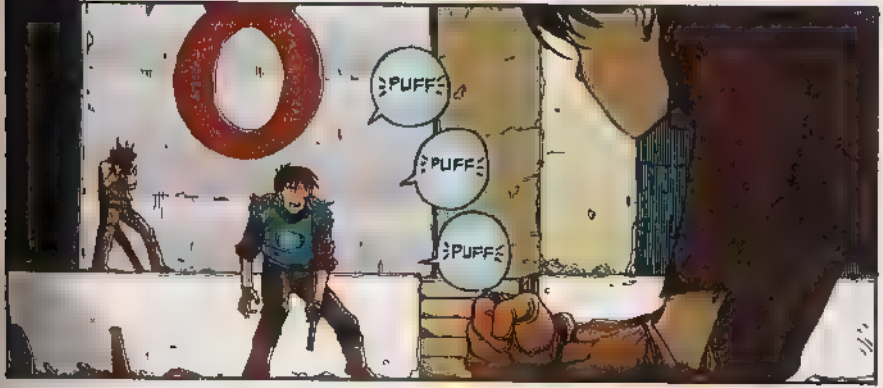
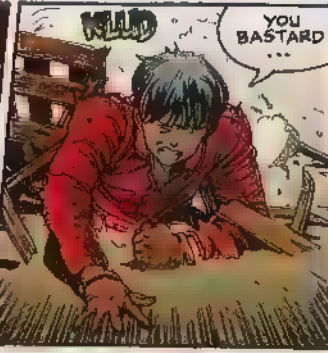
YOU CAN'T
DO IT, CAN
YOU...

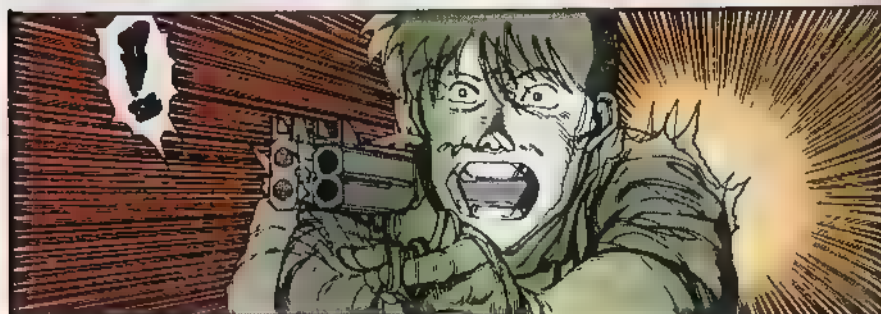
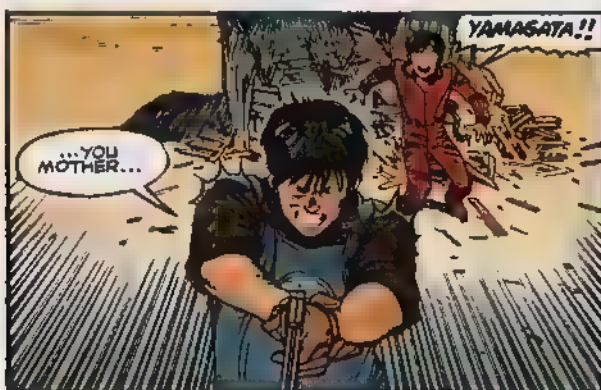
...BECAUSE
I'M YOUR
FRIEND..

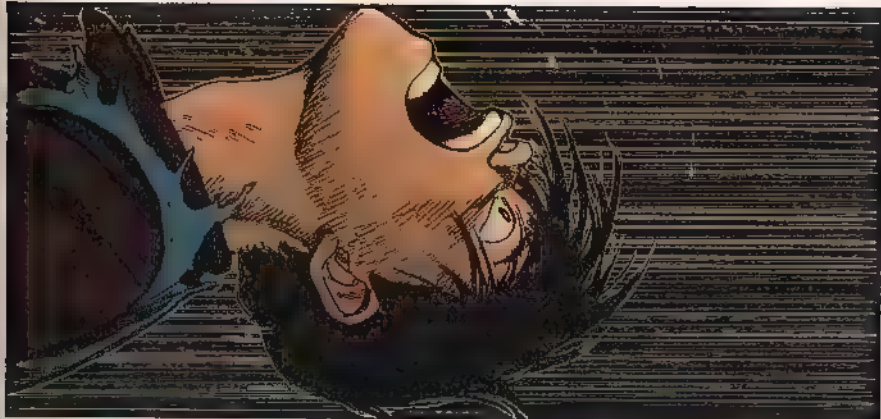


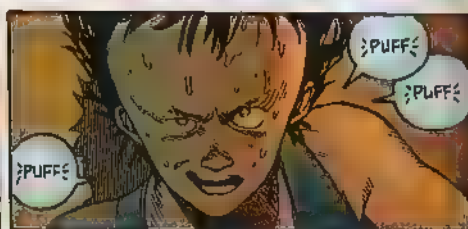








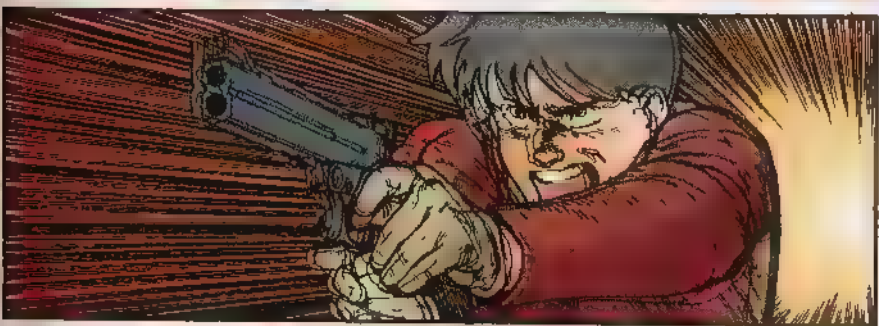




YOU
STINKING...

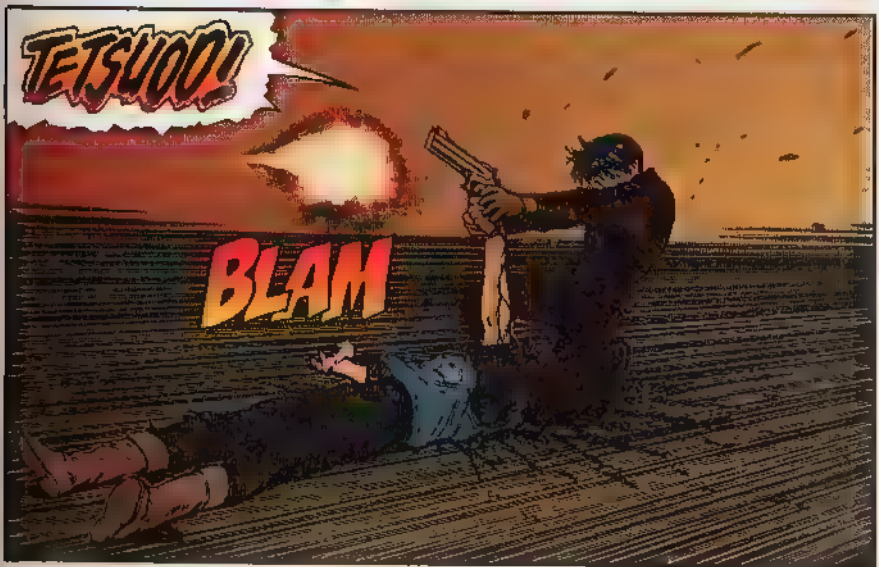


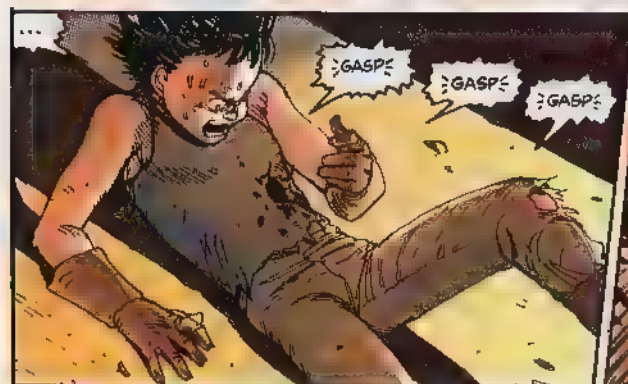
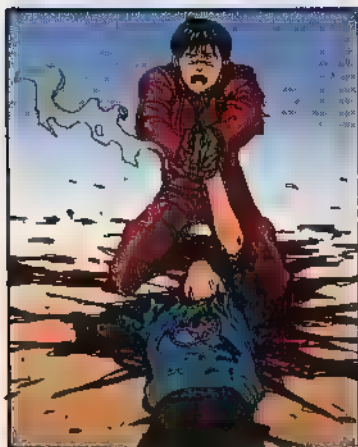
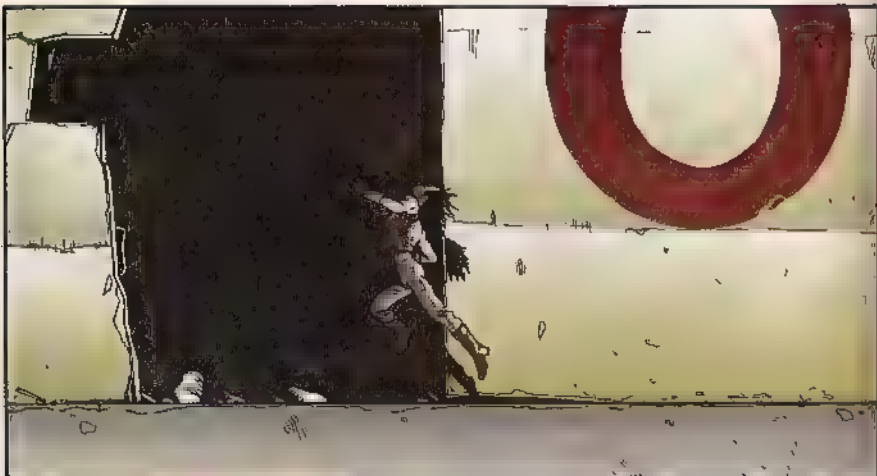
YOU'RE
DEAD,
TOO!!

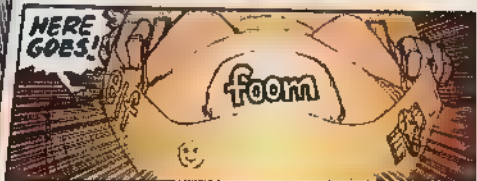
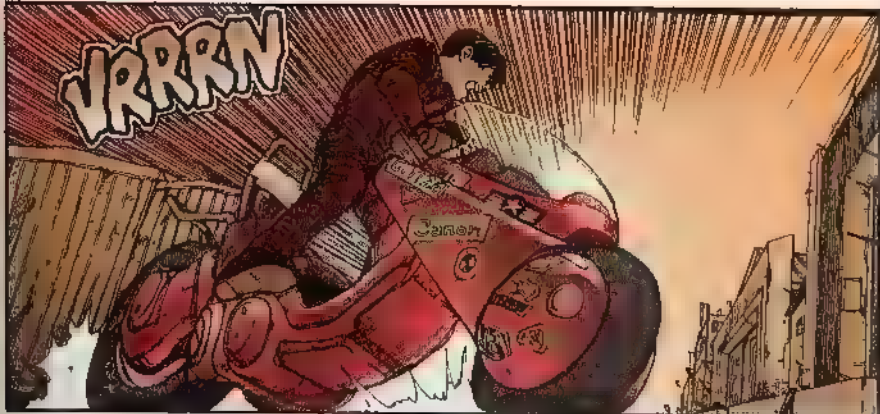


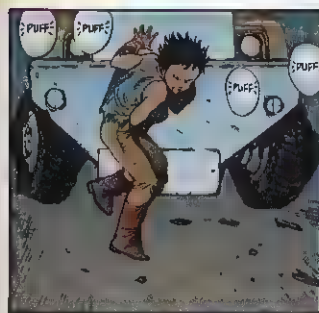
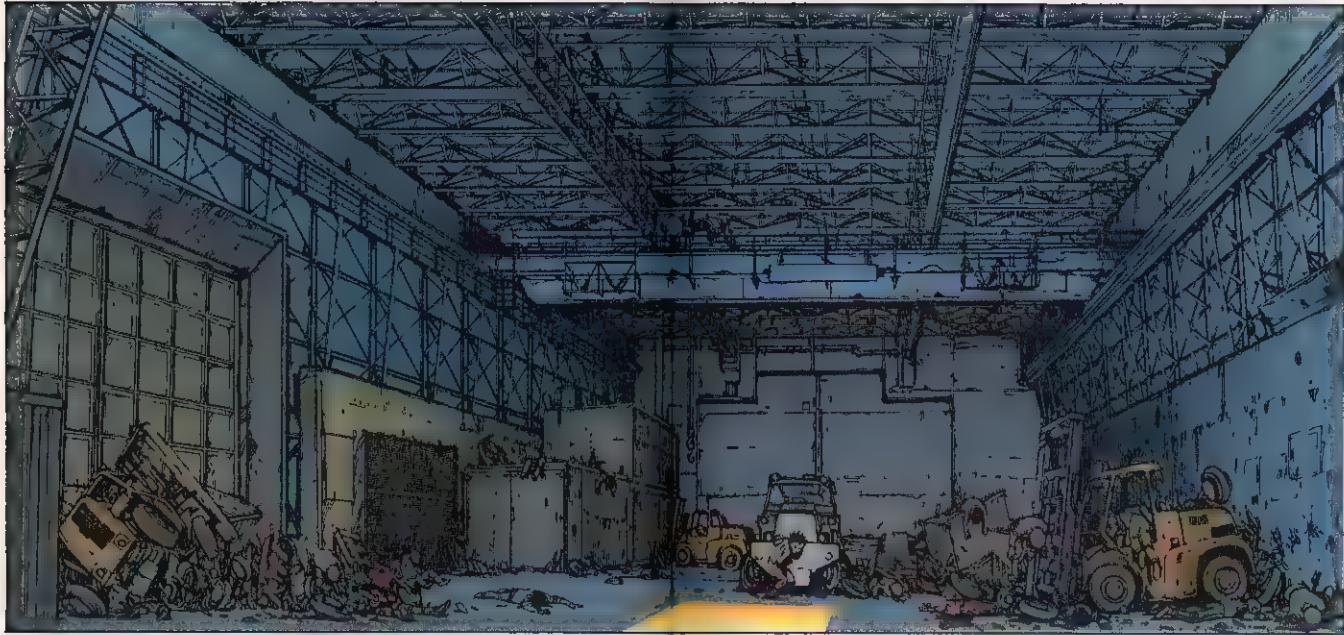
TETSUO!!

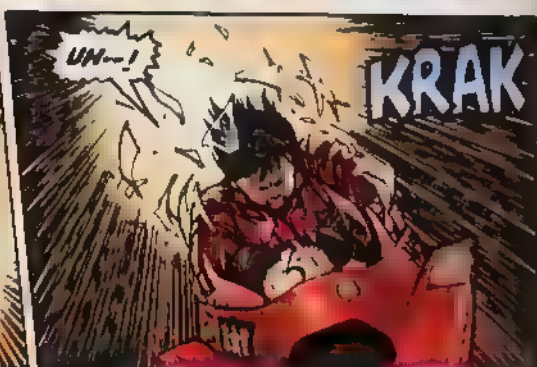
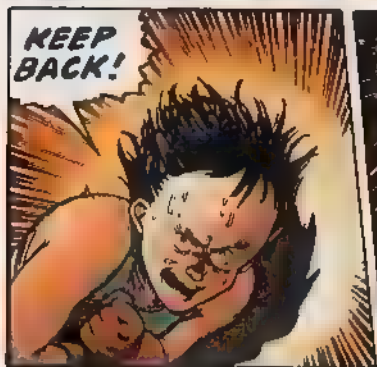
BLAM







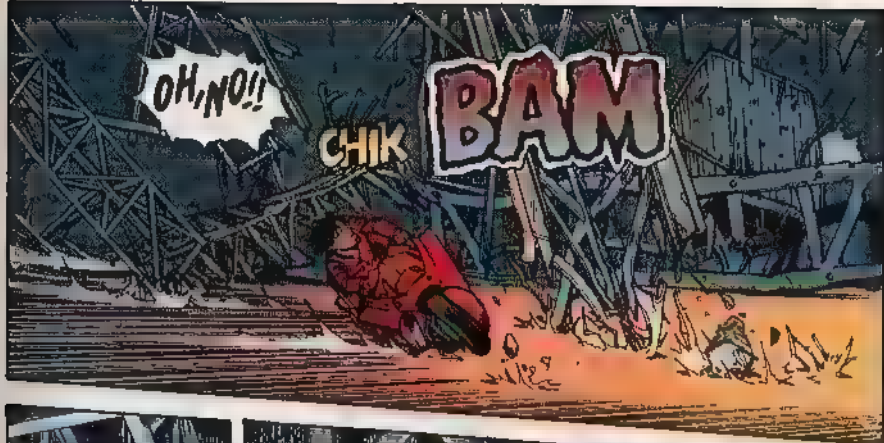




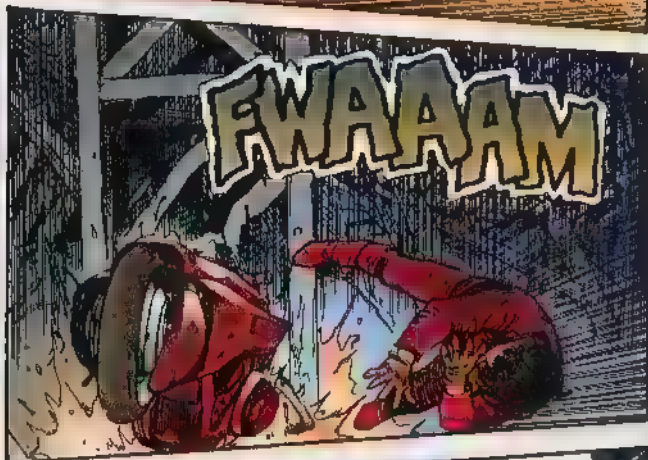
OH, NO!!

CHIK

BAM



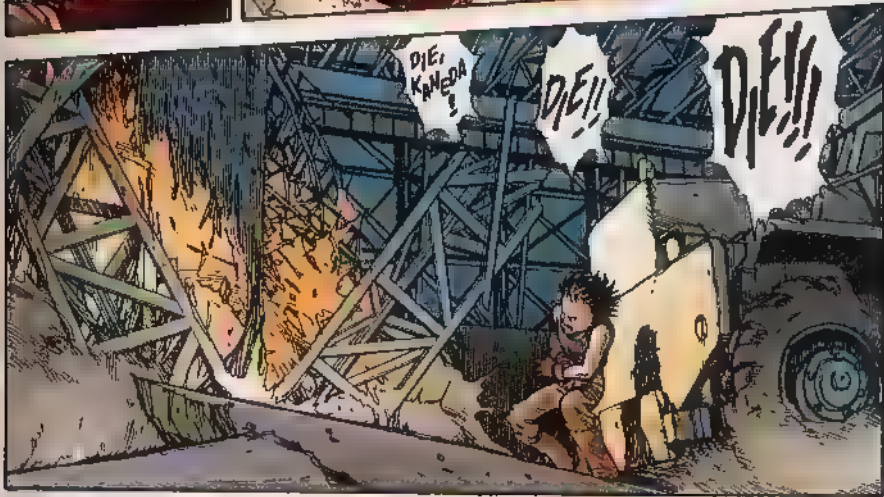
FWAAAM

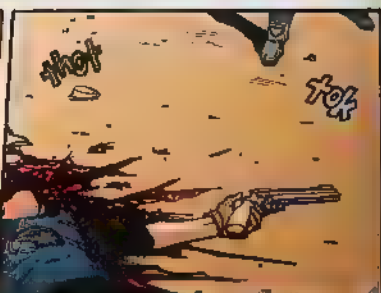


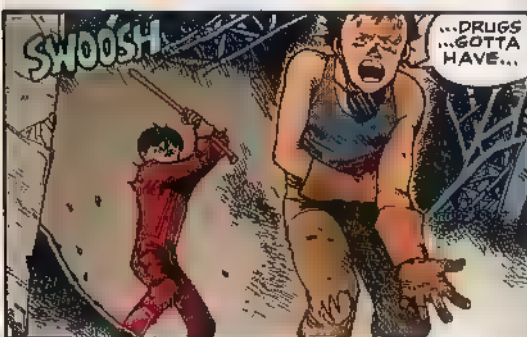
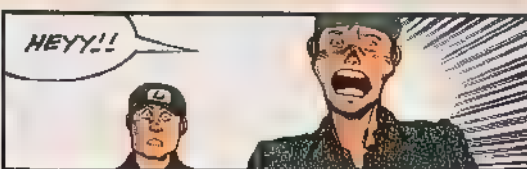
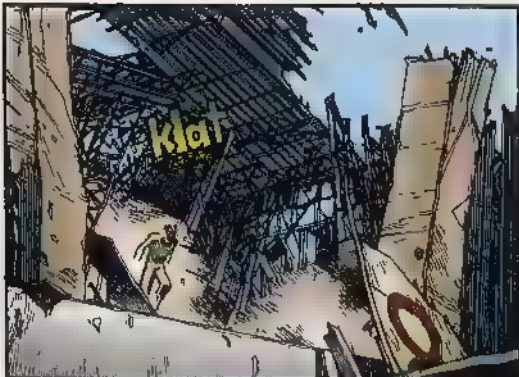
DIE, KANEDA!

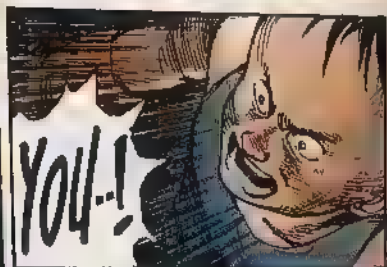
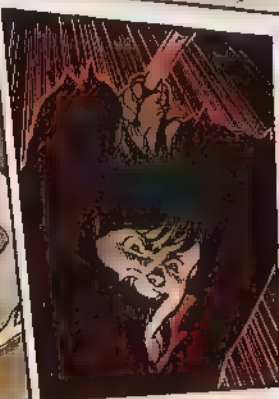
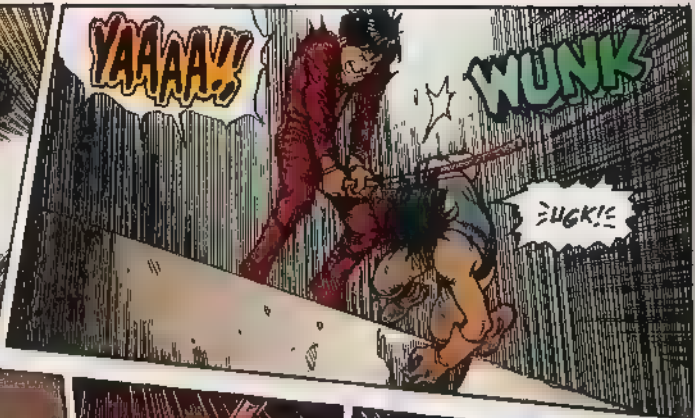
DIE!!

DIE!!!



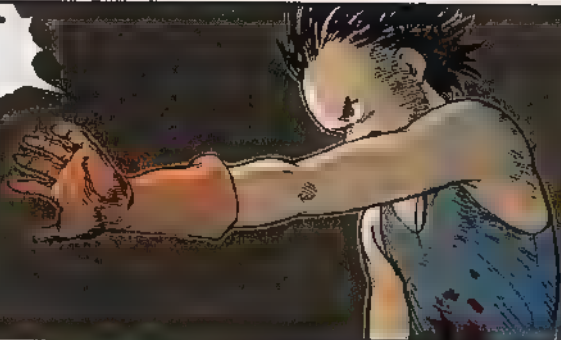








**I'VE GOT
IT!!**



**THAT'S
THE
PILL
THAT--!**



**IT
WAS
YOU,
WASN'T
IT?!**

**YOU
HAD
IT
ALL
ALONG!**

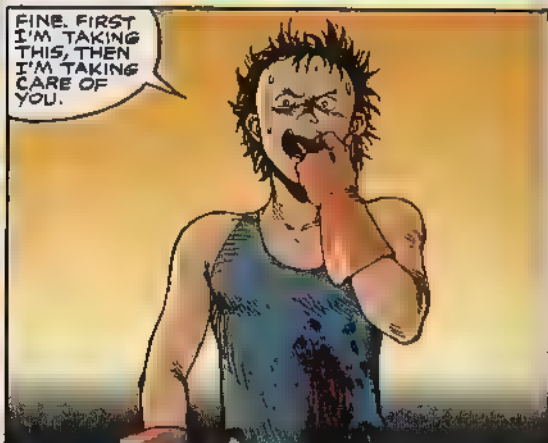


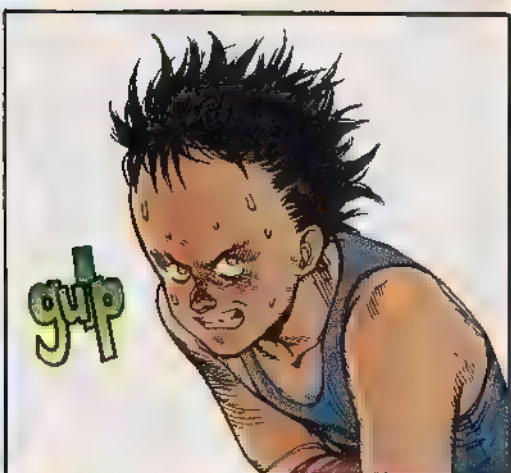
YEAH...

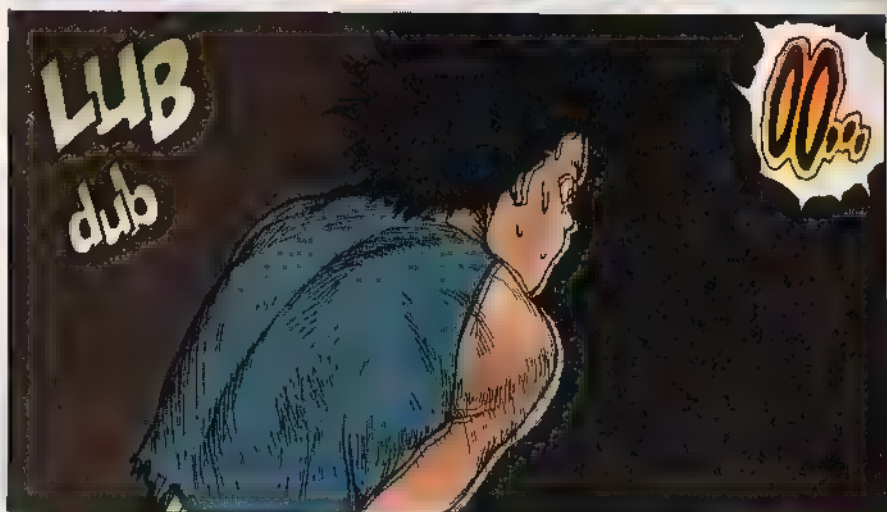
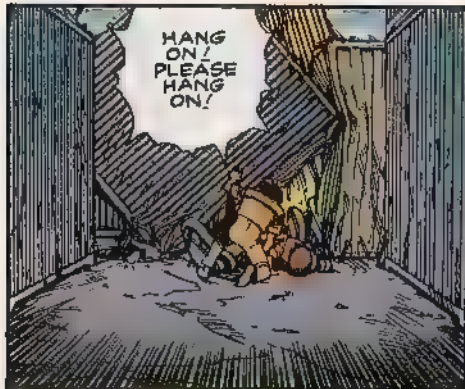
**BUT IF
YOU WANT
IT, IT'S
ALL
YOURS.**

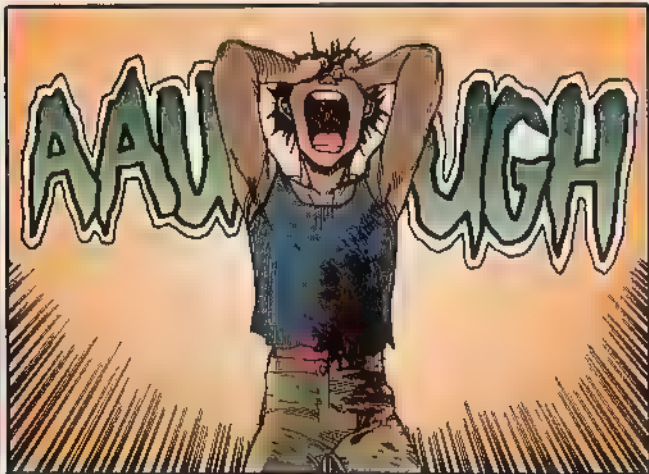
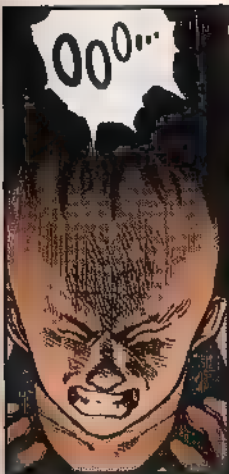


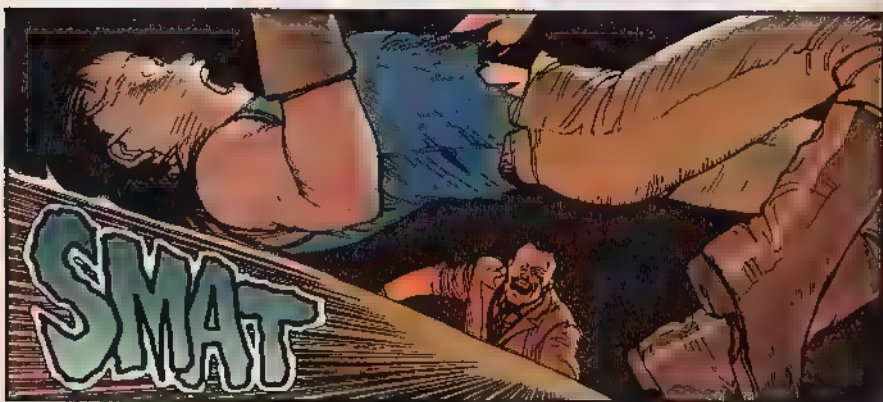
**FINE. FIRST
I'M TAKING
THIS, THEN
I'M TAKING
CARE OF
YOU.**

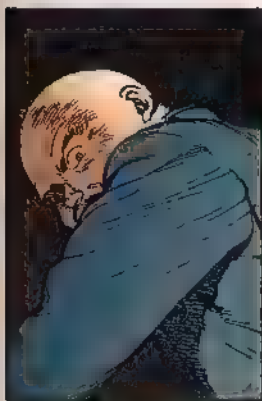


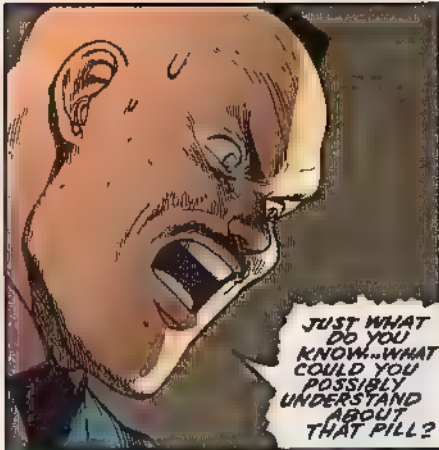








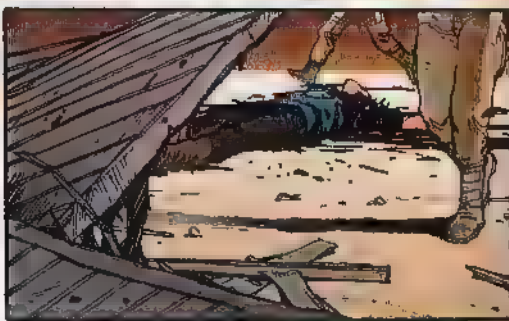
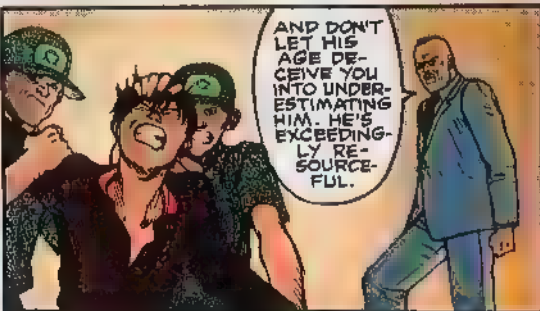
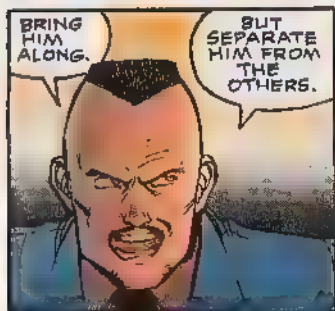


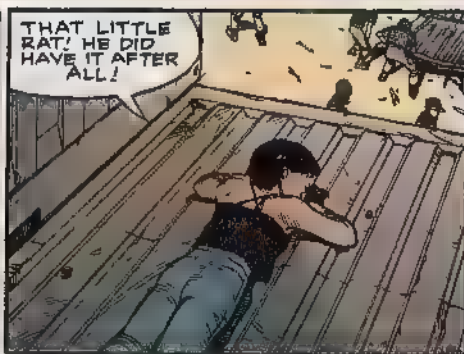


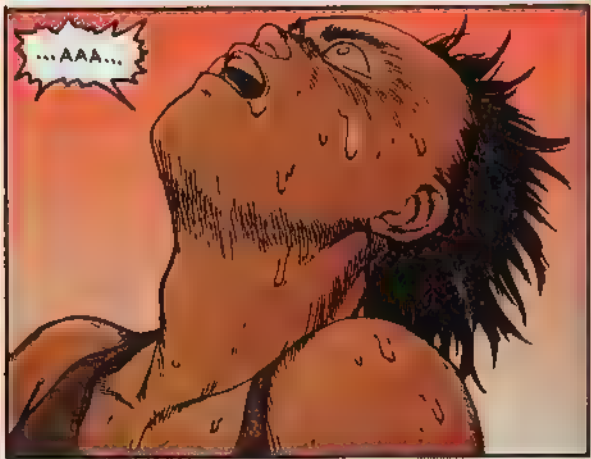
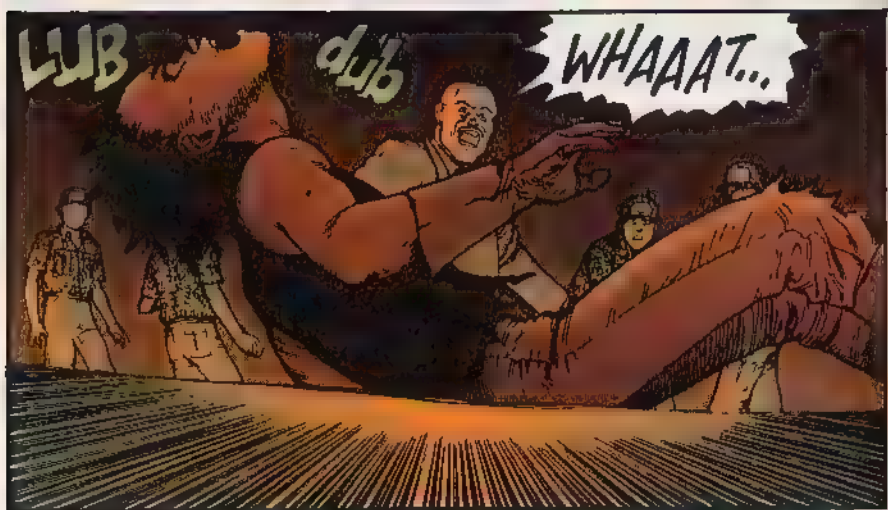
ENOUGH SO I'M SORRY IT WENT TO WASTE.

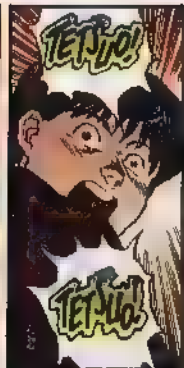
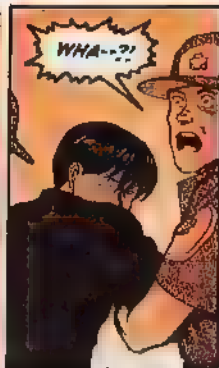


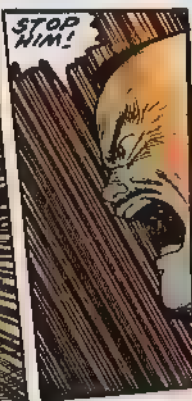
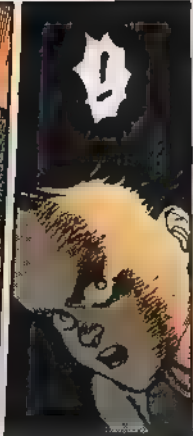
WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH HIM, SIR?

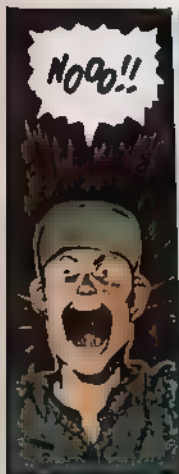
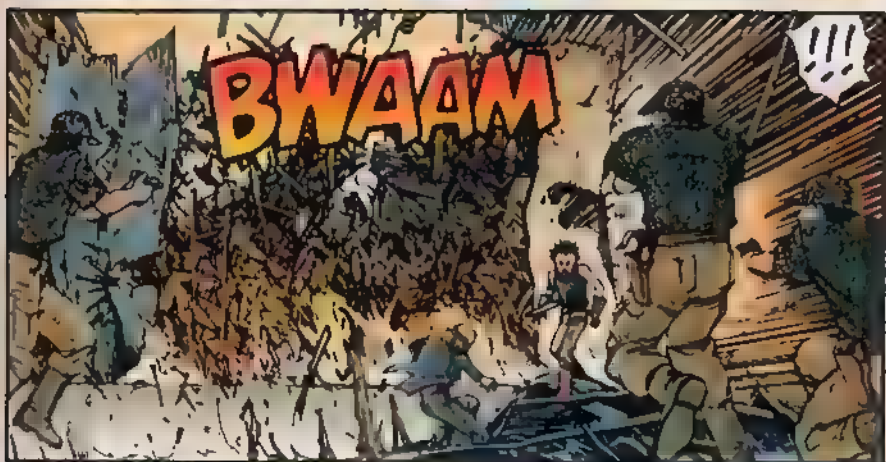


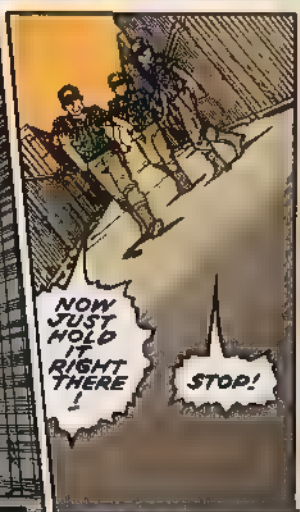
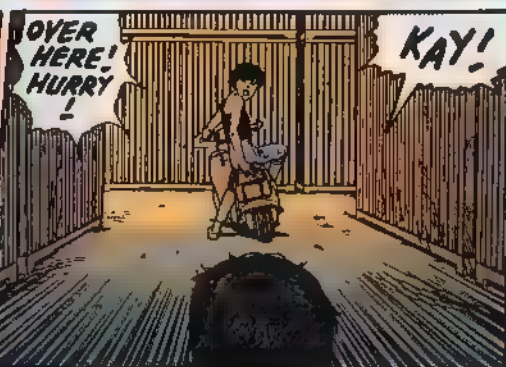
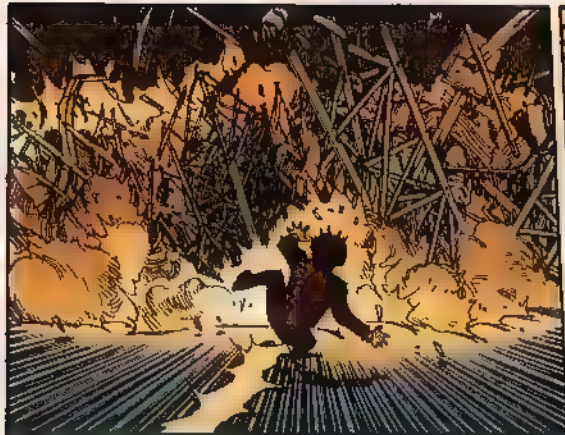


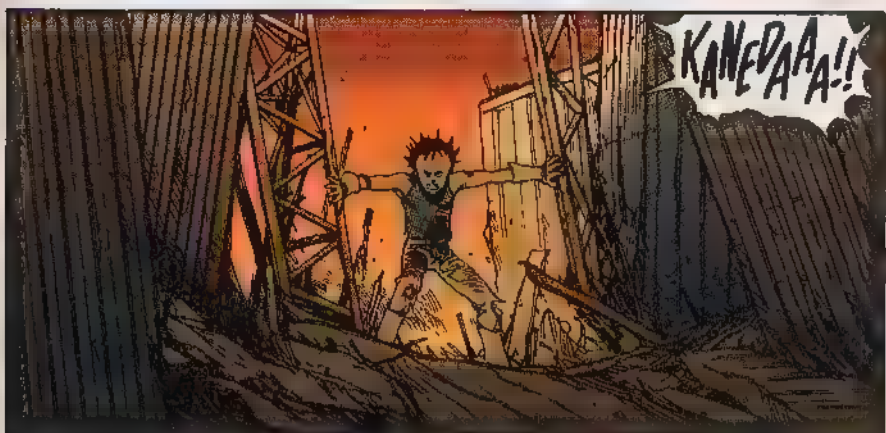
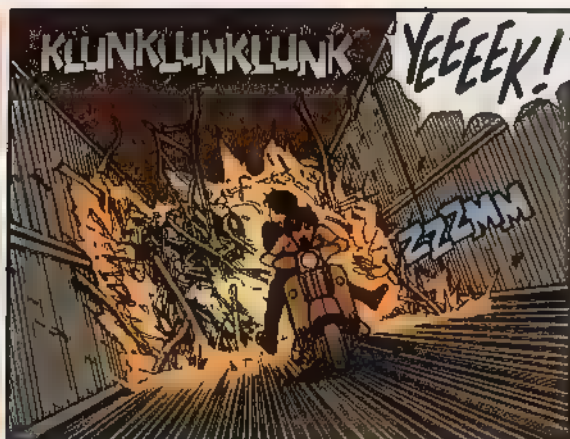


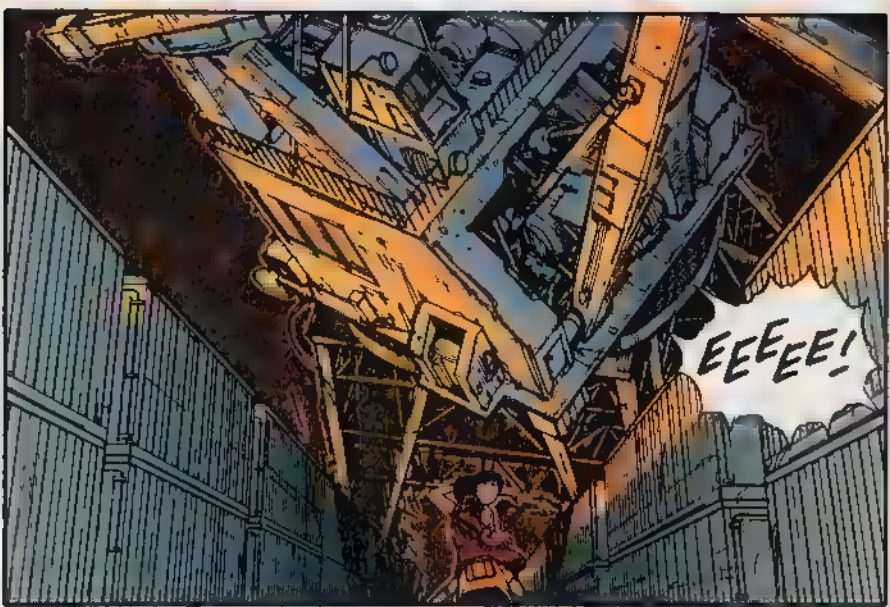
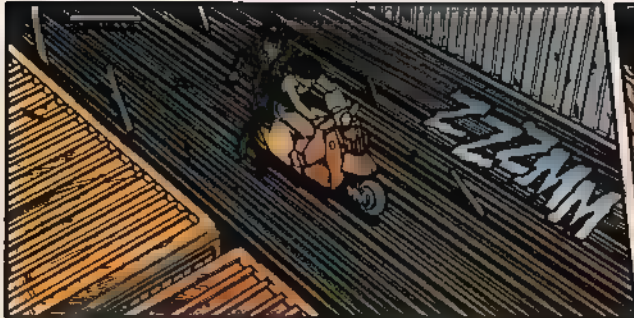


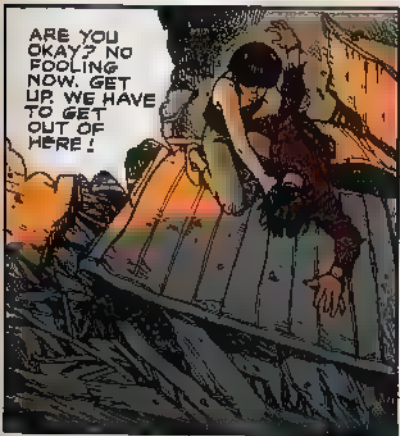
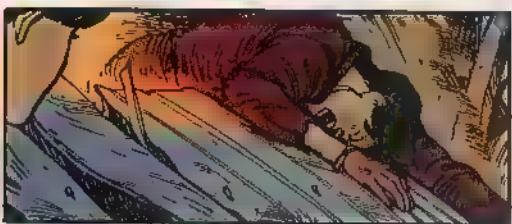












**CLEAR
OUT!**

**YOU'RE
YOU'RE
TETSUO...
AREN'T
YOU?**

**WHY ARE
YOU DOING
THIS?
KANEDA
IS YOUR
FRIEND...
OR
HAVE
YOU
FORGOTTEN
THAT
?!**

**LOOKS LIKE
HE HAS A
NEW FRIEND...
TO DIE WITH!**

TOK

WAIT!

**GET
LOST!**

HAH!

**HEAR
ME
OUT!**

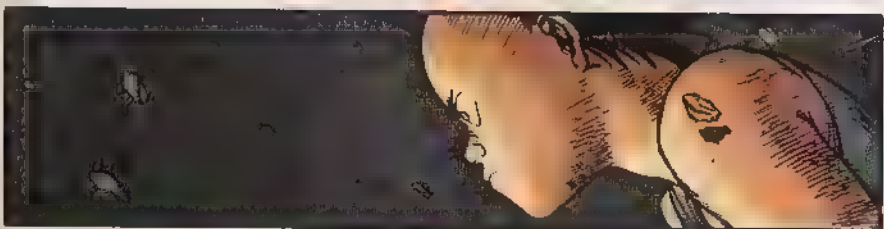
...RRR...

WHY BOTHER
WHEN I CAN
JUST KILL
YOU?



HAVE YOU
CONSIDERED
WHAT IT
WILL BE LIKE
WITHDRAWING
FROM THE
DRUG YOU
TOOK?

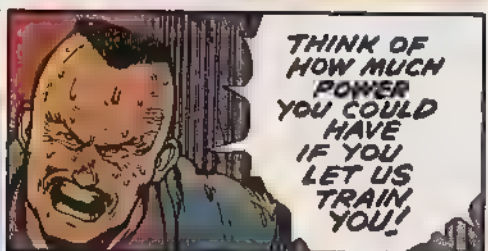
CONSIDER
THE PAIN
YOU FACE!
CONSIDER
WHERE
THE DRUG
CAME
FROM
!!



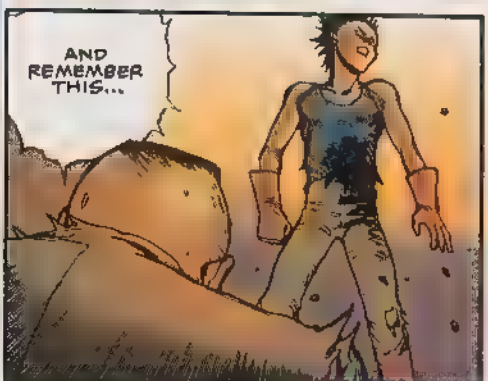
PUFF

PUFF

THINK...
THINK
ABOUT
IT.

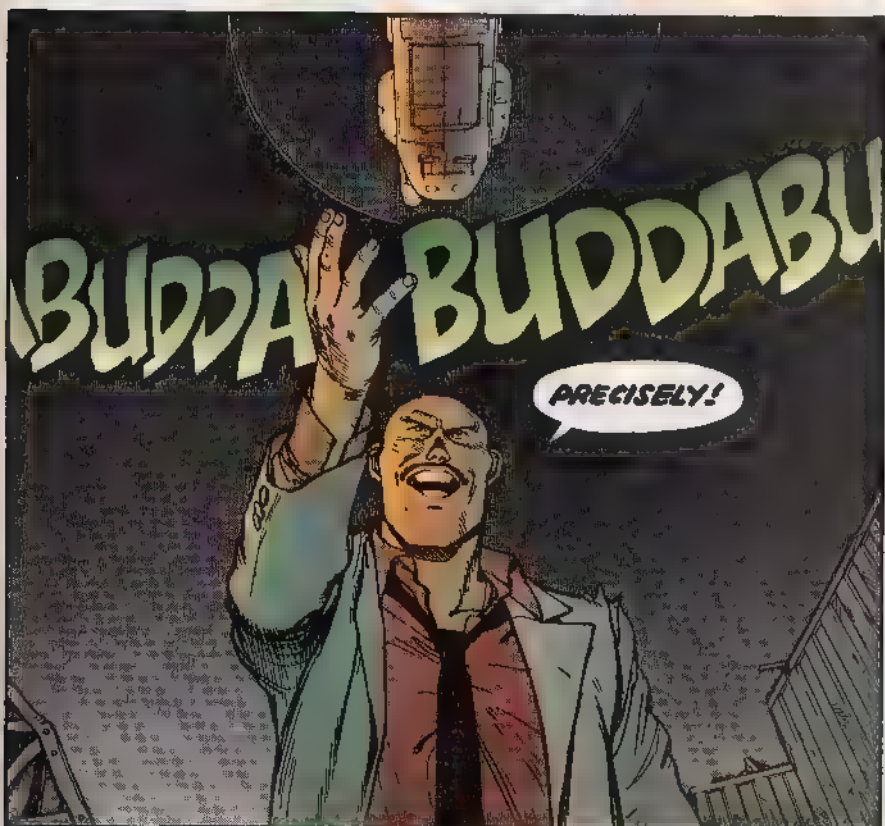


THINK OF
HOW MUCH
POWER
YOU COULD
HAVE
IF YOU
LET US
TRAIN
YOU!



AND
REMEMBER
THIS...





NEXT ISSUE: **PLAYERS AND PRISONERS**

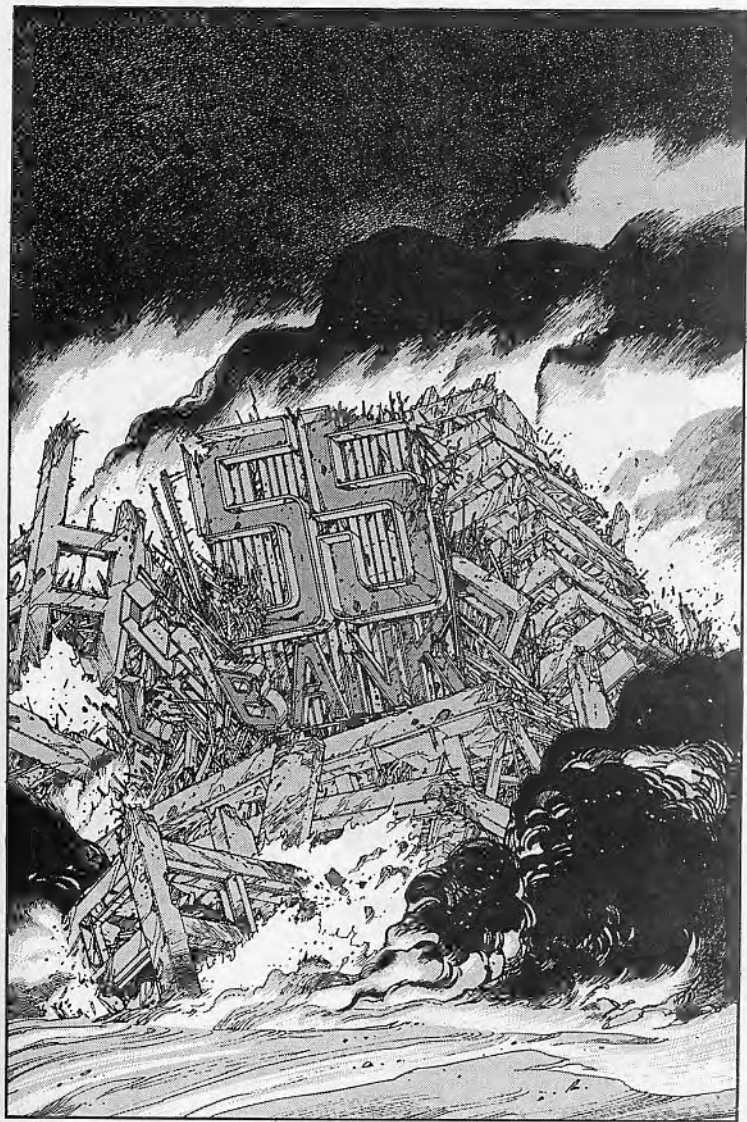
OTOMO
GALLERY

K

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Presented here are examples from this work.





Most of these *Young Magazine* pieces will be used in time as color cover art for our Epic edition of *Akira*.

Pleased as we are with the results of presenting Mr. Otomo's work in color, we are also second-to-none in admiring the strength and design dynamics of his art in black-and-white and are happy to have this space where his material can be shown in a form closer to its original presentation. In the future, along with art that relates to *Akira*, we hope to acquaint our readers with samples of Otomo's other comics and illustration.



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chief assistant to Mr. Otomo

MAKOTO SHIOSAKI

SATOSHI TAKABATAKE

assistants to Mr. Otomo

HIROSHI HIRATA

designer, AKIRA calidgraph

AKIRA SAITO

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Epic Comics

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letterer

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ED MAGALONG

production

ANDREW WYATT

editorial assistant, Epic edition

ARCHIE GOODWIN

editor, Epic edition

Combat. In the warehouse district of post-World War III Neo-Tokyo, a showdown is taking place. Two young men, once friends, are engaged in a struggle to destroy each other. Kaneda, rebellious gang leader, has a magnum revolver plus his own wit and determination as weapons. Tetsuo, who recently took over the murderous Clown gang, has devastating psychic powers. He has already used them to kill, swiftly, explosively. Fueled by drugs and madness, he is ready to kill again. Hoping to save Kaneda in this unequal clash is Kay, agent of the underground resistance movement. Hoping to win over Tetsuo is the Colonel, head of a secret government project that needs the youth's paranormal power to control a much greater threat on the verge of awakening...AKIRA.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

